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that is morally wrong.*

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Senate Advances Bill Protecting Taxpayers *Sen. Gibbons' Bill Mandates Rollbacks, Closes Loopholes, Informs Taxpayers and Expands Relief*

JEFFERSON CITY –A Senate bill that protects Missouri taxpayers from tax increases caused by reassessment today advanced to the House for consideration. Senate Leader Mike Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, sponsored the property tax reform bill, Senate Bill 711, which also closes tax increase loopholes, requires earlier notice and more information, and expands tax relief for seniors and the disabled.

"The days of taxpayers getting hit with tax increases because of reassessment are almost over," Gibbons said. "We're protecting taxpayers from being taxed out of their homes and businesses."

The bill mandates that all taxing jurisdictions, regardless of whether they are operating at or below their tax rate ceiling, must roll back their tax rate to counter reassessment increases. Currently, only taxing jurisdictions operating at their tax rate ceiling are required by Missouri's Constitution to roll back to protect taxpayers, leaving taxing jurisdictions operating below their ceiling to approve back door tax increases with no legal recourse.

"With this bill, taxing boards must roll back their tax rates to protect taxpayers," he said. "Also, they will no longer be able to apply voter approved increases to new reassessments meaning no more double whammies on the taxpayers."

The bill closes a loophole that allows taxing districts to apply new voter approved levies to future and unknown assessments. The Attorney General's office issued an [opinion](#) (107-2003) in 2003 stating that taxing jurisdictions can take a tax increase approved by the voters, for example in 2006, and then apply that new tax rate to the higher reassessed value in 2007.

It also requires that taxpayers receive a projected tax liability along with their reassessment notices. Gibbons said charter counties and the City of St. Louis will provide these in 2009, with all other counties participating by 2011. It also increases the Senior Citizen Property Tax credit award from \$750 to \$1,100, and expands those eligible to include homeowners, not renters, with an income of up to \$30,000 for singles and \$40,000 for married couples.

"The protections will help limit tax increases, while the early notice and extra assistance will help everyone better prepare for the taxes they owe in December," Gibbons said.

More information about the bill is available at www.senate.mo.gov. keyword search SB711.

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